



Health Careers In Alaska

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Dental Assistant

Dental assistants help dentists in a variety of tasks. They are often the first professional the patient comes into contact with in the dental clinic. Dental assistants prepare patients for examination and treatment. They are half of “four-handed” dentistry, helping the dentist in arranging and selecting instruments, preparing materials and equipment,

taking and processing x-rays, providing instruction to patients, and keeping detailed and accurate records of patient care. Other duties may include applying decay-preventive material to the teeth, making impressions, and providing oral hygiene instructions.

Dental Assistant Facts:

Where do dental assistants work in Alaska?

In rural Alaska, dental assistants work wherever dentists practice. All dentists require one or more assistants. Most rural Alaskan dental assistants are employed in salaried positions with the Indian Health Service or regional health corporations. Others work in private practice as employees of dentists.

Educational Requirements

The American Dental Association (ADA) offers an accredited curriculum within dental schools, community colleges, vocational-technical schools, and private institutions. Most training sequences are similar:

- Graduation from high school or a GED. Biology, English, and office skills are often desirable. Good grades make it easier to be accepted into dental assistant training.
- Most dental assisting programs require a college entrance exam (ACT, SCAT, or SAT), and possibly the Nelson-Denny or Dental Assisting Aptitude Test (DAAT).
- Dental assisting training programs are between nine months and two years in length and award either a vocational certificate or community college associate degree.

Hourly Wage Range:

\$14.15-\$26.96 (Mean \$20.20)

**based on Alaska DOL data*

Years in School:

2 years or less (after high school graduation).

Academic Programs in Alaska

University of Alaska Anchorage Community and Technical College

Dental Assisting Program

Phone: (907) 786-6929

Email: aydent@uaa.alaska.edu

Web site: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/alliedhealth/academics/dental/assisting/proginform.cfm>

University of Alaska Fairbanks Community and Technical College

Dental Assisting Program-Allied Health Department

Jenifer Filotei, Program Coordinator

Phone: (907) 455-2891

Email: ffjaf1@uaf.edu

Web site: <http://www.ctc.uaf.edu/programs/health/da/index.html>

State Contact:

Alaska Dental Society

9170 Jewel Lake Rd. #203

Anchorage, AK 99502-5390

Phone: (907) 563-3003

Email: akdental@alaska.net

Web site: <http://www.akdental.org/>

National Contact:

American Dental Association

211 East Chicago Ave.

Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: (312) 440-2500

Web site: <http://www.ada.org>

